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U.S. Department of Transportation Funds Innovative Research Providing Vital Training for Next Generation of Transportation Leaders

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Awards invest in research, workforce development programs with colleges and universities around the U.S., including HBCUs, Tribal colleges, and community colleges.

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg announced up to \$435 million in grant awards for [34 University Transportation Centers \(UTC\)](#) that will help the next generation of transportation professionals make our roads, bridges, rail, shipping, and airspace safer, more innovative, and more efficient. UTCs advance transportation expertise and technology in the varied disciplines that comprise the field of transportation through education, research, and technology transfer activities. Project focus areas include, but are not limited to, improving the mobility of disadvantaged populations to mitigating impacts of extreme weather impacts on our Nation's transportation systems to identifying and mitigating cybersecurity risks.

“We are proud to support University Transportation Centers across the country that are developing cutting-edge technologies to improve our transportation systems for years to come,” said **Secretary Buttigieg**. “With this investment, we’ll be able to support a new generation of leaders as they continue to pursue research that will usher in safer, cleaner, and more accessible ways to get people where they need to go.”

“The work performed by our next generation of diverse transportation researchers at these Centers will help the American people travel more safely, quickly, and affordably. The Centers at these two-and-four-year colleges and universities advance U.S. technology and expertise in the many disciplines comprising transportation through education, solutions-oriented research and technology transfer, and the exploration and sharing of cutting-edge ideas and approaches,” said **Dr. Robert C. Hampshire, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology**.”

President Biden’s historic infrastructure package included \$90 million in funding per year for the competitively selected UTC Program grants. Reflecting the popularity of the program, the Department received a total of 230 grant applications during this competition, which represents the largest number of applications ever submitted in the 35-year history of the UTC Program.

Prairie View A&M University made history as the first Historically Black College and University (HBCU) to become a national UTC grantee. An additional four HBCUs are lead consortia of UTCs selected for an award, and another five consortia members are Hispanic-Serving Institutions/Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Overall, there is a record number of HBCUs, MSIs, and Tribal colleges participating this year.

Selected National UTCs include:

- **\$4 million/year for Clemson University to lead a group focused on cybersecurity:** This UTC will continuously monitor and address the vulnerabilities of cybersecurity associated with transportation cyber-physical-social systems (TCPSS). TCPSS uses computations and communication embedded in and interacting with physical processes to add new capabilities to transportation systems. This UTC will work on identifying challenges and threats across transportation modes, geographies, and applications; and pioneering advanced cybersecurity strategies and solutions for multimodal transportation.
 - Consortia members: Benedict College, Florida International University, Morgan State University (MD), Purdue University, South Carolina State University, University of Alabama

at Tuscaloosa, University of California at Santa Cruz, and University of Texas at Dallas

- **\$4 million/year for University of California, Davis to lead a group focused on the environment:** This UTC will focus on accelerating equitable decarbonization that benefits both the transportation system and the well-being of people in overburdened and historically disadvantaged communities. It will concentrate research activities in three critical domains: vehicle technology to accelerate lower greenhouse gas emissions, infrastructure provision, and reshaping travel demand.
 - Consortia members: California State University Long Beach, Georgia Institute of Technology, Texas Southern University, University of California Riverside, University of Southern California, and University of Vermont.
- **\$4 million/year for Prairie View A&M (TX) University to lead a group focused on infrastructure:** This HBCU-led UTC will develop and transfer into practice new technologies or approaches not currently deployed in the transportation system, including novel data and technology approaches related to artificial intelligence and environmental stewardship/resilience. The research activities will aim to develop and deploy interoperable data platforms and technology systems for transportation planning and infrastructure operations.
 - Consortia members: Arizona State University, Blinn Community College (TX), Michigan State University, Rutgers University and Texas A&M University
- **\$4 million/year for University of Texas at Austin to lead a group focused on mobility:** This UTC will execute the Transportation Heartbeat of America Survey to collect longitudinal data to understand how travel behavior and demand is evolving. By undertaking this breakthrough research for measuring, monitoring, modeling, and managing traveler behaviors, it aims to foster the design, development, and operation of a people-centric, multimodal, intelligent transportation system that meets the needs of people, institutions, and businesses.
 - Consortia members: Arizona State University, California State Polytechnic University Pomona, City College of New York, Diné College (Navajo Nation), Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Michigan, and University of Washington
- **\$4 million/year for Carnegie Mellon University to lead a group focused on safety:** This UTC will implement an innovative system-of-systems approach to integrate autonomous, connected, electric and shared vehicles (ACES) technologies into transportation networks. The research will address challenges of connected/automated vehicles (simulation, systems design, validation, and testing) and infrastructure (planning, design, condition assessment and monitoring) to equip U.S. companies with innovative technologies including AI, data analytics, connectivity, edge computing and smart infrastructure.
 - Consortia members: Community College of Allegheny County, Community College of Philadelphia, Morgan State University (MD), Ohio State University, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Further, nine Regional UTCs (\$3 million/year each) and 20 Tier One UTCs (\$2 million/year each) will address the following research priority areas:

- Reducing **Congestion**
- Reducing Transportation **Cybersecurity** Risks
- Preserving the **Environment**
- Improving the Durability and Extending the Life of Transportation **Infrastructure**
- Improving **Mobility** of People and Goods
- Promoting **Safety**
- Preserving the Existing **Transportation System**

An interactive map depicting all the UTCs can be found [here](#).

For more information on the [UTC Program](#), contact Nancy Wilochka, (202) 366-5128.

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